A

Call from Heaven

TO

GOD'S ELISHA'S,

To MOURN and LAMENT,

When God takes away his *Elijah's*, either by a natural, or by a civil death.

Isaiah, 57. 1.

The Righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away, none considering, that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come

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LONDON,

Printed in the year, 1667.

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To the Christian Reader.

I *Know many excellent* Funeral *Sermons upon this* Text *are in Print, but I know not one that hath been* printed *upon such an* occasion: *yea, I have not met with any one, that either upon* this *Scripture, or any* other, *hath* ex professo *taken into consideration the* civil *deaths of God's* Elijahs; *and yet the civil deaths of* some *of them hath happened in* most *ages, and even of* most *of them may hereafter happen in* ours, *if the Prophesie concerning the slaying of the witnesses* [b] *be not yet fulfilled. However, if here were said nothing but what hath been already said in a* various *method, the* variety *of the method might make the* repetition grateful: *Yea, I am sure I am doing the work of God; I do but repeat his voice, and once more sound his* Trumpet, *which hath been* too-too oft *sounded* in vain. *It is true to all ages,* the righteous perisheth, and no man layes it to heart [c]: i.e. *Either none at all of the sensual beasts, spoken of in the former chapter, or very few of any sort in comparison of the great number of those of all sorts that do not: very few indeed do lay it* upon their hearts (*as it is in the Hebrew*) *that it may soak into them, so as to be suitably affected and afflicted. This will be also true when Christs witnesses shall be slain* civilly [d]. They that dwell on the earth, i.e. *all those that are of an earthly and not of an heavenly spirit,* shall rejoice over them, i.e. *they will be glad even to think of their slaughter,* and make merry; *i.e. either they will make feasts in token of their joy, or they will be as joyful as those that do make feasts for joy; yea,* they will send gifts, i.e. *they will do whatever they can to make others to rejoice with them at their death. Seeing the* same disease *remains, why may not the* same remedies *be used?* An ancient [f] wisheth, that in places infected with Heresie all men would write, that have any faculty in writing, though it be but the same things in other words, to the end

Ca. Fitz. Geffery. T. Hookes. O. Sedgwick. J. Collins. J. Gaulen. S. Patrick, &c.

[b] Rev. 11.7.

[c] The things I present, are *nova dicta, etsi non nova*, *Observations* not new, yet in a *new dress*; as *new* things are *acceptable*, so among them nothing more then new *clothes*. The old *saing, nil dictum, quod non dictum prius*, proveth all writings to be but *various descant* on *plainer rudiments*; or if you will, but the *Anagram* of the *Alphabet*, and *transposition* of mens various *collections* from.

[d] Isa. 57.1. *Men* and *Books*. See Dr. *Whitlocks* preface to *Zootomia*. p. 2.

[e] Rev. 11.10.

[f] *Aug. l. 1. de a. cap. 3.*

that all ſorts of people among many books might light upon ſome, &c. *Is there not the ſame reaſon for the ſame wish, when any other ſoul deſtroying diſtemper is epidemical? Were there never ſo great ſtore of preſervatives againſt a raging peſtilence, we would ſubſcribe to the proverb,* Store is no ſore; *But alas! here is no ſtore at all. Such a diſcourſe cannot therefore be looked upon as* needleſs *and* unſeaſonable *at* any time, *though at* ſometimes *it is more then ordinarily neceſſary and ſeaſonable, as is evident by its* errand. *Here God's* Elijah's *are not called upon (at any time) to call for* fire *upon others* heads; *but (at ſometimes eſpecially) for* ſpings of water *in their own* hearts: *they are not called upon (at any time) to* ſmite *others with the* tongue, *or* hand, *but (at ſome times eſpecially) to* ſmite *on their own thighs: They are not called (at any time) to* draw blood, *or make places* Acheldama's, *but (at ſome times eſpecially) to* draw water, *and pour it out before the Lord, and make places* Bochims: *In a word, they are not called (at any time) to gather themſelves into* Conventicles (*properly ſo called*) *to revenge themſelves upon the* inſtruments *of their* miſeries: *They are onely called to gather themſelves into* lawful Aſſemblies *to* humble *themſelves for* ſinning *away their* Elijah's, *when they are indeed taken away either by a* natural, *or a* civil *death. The Lord be pleaſed to give thee and me the* hearing ear, *and the* obedient ſpirit *to this* Call from Heaven. Amen, Amen.

2 King. 2. 12.

And Elisha saw it, and he cried, my Father, my Father; the Chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

IN these words we have,

1. *A double cause,*
2. *A double effect.*

1. *A double cause;*
   1. Elisha's *Vision,*
   2. *The cessation of the Vision.*

1. Elisha's *Vision, and* Elisha *saw it.* Here observe,
   1. The *Object.*
   2. The *Act.*

1. *The Object.* In the verse before the Text we are told, that *Elijah* was taken away (not by a natural death, but) *by a fiery Chariot, and Horses of fire*[a]; by the holy Angels appearing in such a likeness: this was the object of *Elisha's* Vision, he saw *Elijah* taken up towards Heaven in a fiery Chariot with fiery Horses. Herein God suited *Elijah's death* to his *life*; his life *burnt* with *zeal* for the *pure worship* of God, and he was translated into *Heaven* in *a fiery*

[a] Mr. Jackson upon 2 King. 2. 12.

Chariot, with horses of *fire*; his *zeal* for God made him *hated* of all sorts of *men*: but *God* did not onely set a *miraculous mark* of his *favour* upon him, whilest he *lived* persecuted to the death, but sent for him to *heaven* in extraordinary *pomp*, causing a troop of the *heavenly host*, his own immediate *guard*, to be his *Convoys*, to declare him to all ages, to be *a man high in his favour*: But so much for the object, or what *Elisha* saw.

2. The *act* upon this object is here emphatically set down, *And Elisha saw it*, or was seeing it, according to the Hebrew. Hereby we are not onely assured of the truth of the transaction, but *Elisha* was assured of a double portion of *Elijah's* spirit; for this was the onely condition thereof, *If thou shalt see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so*[a]. But so much for the first cause mentioned in the Text, *Elisha's Vision*. There is another, and that is,

a 2 King. 2. 10.

2. *The cessation of the vision, and he saw him no more*. God withdrew *Elijah* to a state invisible: *Elisha* saw *Elijah* taken away, but after his ascention he saw him no more. Thus we see the double cause mentioned in the Text. There is also.

2. *A double effect* mentioned in the Text; each cause hath *its* effect set down: the *effect* of *Elisha's vision* is *Elisha's Cry*; the *effect* of *the cessation of the vision* is *Elishah's taking hold of his own clothes, and rending them into two pieces*: *Elisha's* crying and rending his clothes, shew *how* he was affected, when he saw *Elijah* taken quite out of his sight: the matter of his cry, or what he said, shews *why* he was so affected thereat. Here therefore I shall consider two things.

1. *How Elishah was affected.*
2. *Why he was so affected with Elijah's being taken away.*

1. *How he was affected*. He was affected with very much grief of heart. This is evident in that,

1. It

1. It is said, *he cried out* [a]; the word signifies the crying of one in misery; *a complaining cry*. It is used to express the cry of the poor under oppression, *Exod.* 22. 23. Here the word is in the second Conjugation, and *Grammarians* tells us that addeth to the signification, *vehementer crebro*. He *cried* as one afflicted *vehemently*, and *frequently*.

2. It is said (according to *Junius* and *Tremelius* [b]) *he cried until he saw him no more*.

3. It is said, he thus cried, *my Father, my Father*: now these words are expressions of sorrow and lamentation, as appears by *Joash* his weeping over this *Elisha*, and saying these very words, *O my father, my father, &c* [c]. and by Gods saying, That *there should be no lamentation for Jehoiakim, saying, Ah my brother, or Ah Lord*, &c [d].

4. The words are doubled, *My father, my father*: Thus *David* expressed the greatness of his grief for the death of *Absalom* [e]: *The king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept, and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom: would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son.* It is not alway true, that *the greatest grief speaketh least* [f]; sometimes (like some *Eccho's*) *it doubleth*, yea, *trebleth* the word.

5. It is said, *He rent his own clothes in two pieces*. This was an usual ceremony among the Jews, to express sorrow of heart, even the rending of their hearts, and the wounds which sorrow made on their souls [g]. All these particulars shew that *Elisha* was affected with very much grief for the loss of *Elijah*. I come now to consider,

2. *Why he was thus affected*. In the emphatical matter of *Elisha's* cry, we have implied, if not expressed, two sorts of *causes* of his sorrow:

1. *Outward*,
2. *Inward*.

1. The *external* causes were his own *particular* losse, and the *publick* loss.

[a] Et ecce ululans. *Int. Lat. Vers. Syr. in Bib. Polyglot.* Clamavit constitutus in tormento, vel oppressione, clamavit voce quærulâ. *Avenar.*

[b] Quod *Elisha* videns, ipse clamavit, & donec non viderat eum amplius.

[c] 2 King. 13. 14.

[d] Jer. 22. 18.

[e] 2 Sam. 18. 33.

[f] Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes stupent.

[g] Ut dolori suo satisfaceret. *Sanct. in loc.*

1. *His own particular loss:* The loss of *Elijah* was unto *Elisha*, as the loss of a dear *father* to a loving *child*. *My father, my father*; *Elijah* was not father to *Elisha* by *nature*, but by a surer bond, even by *grace*. *Elijah* having no son, *adopted* godly *Elisha* for his son, made him his heir, and bequeathed unto him a spiritual *legacy*, even the inheritance of his spirit doubled upon him; and therefore *Elishah's* loss was greater then if he had lost a natural Father. *Kindred by blood is nothing so near and dear as that by grace*. *Elijah* was not onely as *a Father*, but as *a double Father* to *Elisha*, and therefore the word is ingeminated, *My father, my father*, *q. d.* O my heart is even broke, and would you know the reason? why, I have lost *a Father*, I have lost *such a Father*, I have lost *a double Father*, I have lost *my Father*. *Elijah* had not onely adopted *Elisha* for his spiritual son, but he was his *Master* [a] and *Teacher* [b]; yea, he was his *Fatherly Master*; he taught him with such fatherly care and affection, as if *Elisha* had been his *son* as well as his *scholar*. This was one *cause* of *Elisha's* sorrow, the loss of such a *Lord*, *Master*, and *Father*; The other external *cause* was,

2. *The Publick loss.* *Elisha* begins with his own peculiar loss, but he doth not end there: It's true in publick calamities we may lawfully lament our peculiar afflictions, as *Elisha* here, and *Jeremy* in the general desolation of *Israel* crieth out, *I am the man that have seen affliction*, &c [c]. but then is *sorrow* worth the *doubling* when it is not onely for *particular*, but *publick* losses. *Elisha* did not onely lose his Father; but *Israel* lost their *conduct* to *heaven*, and their *strength* on *earth*: *My father, my father, the Chariot of Israel* [d], *and the horsemen thereof*. *Elijah* was unto *Israel* what *Chariots and horsemen* are unto an *army*: he was instead of an *army* to all *Israel*, their *security* and *safeguard*. The *Chaldee* Paraphrast, and *Arabick* Version [e] read the words thus; *Thou wast better to Israel by thy Prayers, than Chariots and horsemen*. Hinting this most certain

[a] *Naaman's* servant gives the title of Father to his Master, 2 *King.* 5. 13.

[b] It was common among the Jews to give the title of Fathers to their Masters and Teachers: *παλεγγενεσία*, in 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. signifies what their Doctors and Teachers delivered to them. *See Mr.* Patrick's *Serm. at the Fun. of Mr.* J. Smith. *at the end of his Sel. Disc.* p. 488.

[c] *Lam.* 3. 1.

[d] He calls him by this name in an allusion to the Chariot, wherein he was fetch'd to Heaven, and would express by this form of speech the good service he did for *Israel*, *Id. ib.* p. 492.

[e] V. Bibl. Polyglot.

certain truth, that *praying ſouls are a Lands beſt munition* [a]. There ſeems to be a kind of *ſoleciſm* in the Prophets ſpeech, *My father, the Horſemen of Iſrael:* How can *one* man be *horſemen*? How can *one* man be *many* men? Is it not uſually ſaid [b], *one is none*? Hereby is intimated, that *one praying ſoul is as good* (if not better) *munition, as a whole Army Royal.* The Prophet tells us [c], that *for one good grape, the whole cluſter, yea the whole vineyard ſhall be fenced and preſerved:* What a mad age then do they live in, in which the worlds *Horſemen* and *Chariots* are entertained as the *Souldiers* by the *Bores* in the *Low Countries*? They cannot be *ſafe* without them, and yet they cannot *abide* them. What do ſuch mean? Are they weary of their ſafety? Alas poor ſinners! Is it nothing to turn the *edge* of the Saints Prayers *againſt* your ſelves, and ſo make your own *Horſemen* to run *upon* you, and your own *Chariot wheels* to run *over* you? Verily, if you turn the prayers of Saints againſt you, their prayers will quickly turn the God of Saints againſt you. But ſo much for the *external* cauſes of *Eliſha's* grief.

[a] V. Mr. *Charles Fitz Geffery*. on 2 King. 2. 12.

[b] Unus vir, nullus vir.

[c] Iſa. 65. 8.

2. The *internal* cauſes are alſo two.

1. *His high eſteem of Elijah,*
2. *His dear love unto Elijah.*

1. *Eliſha highly eſteemed Elijah*, and therefore he could not chooſe but be much grieved at his being taken away from him. His words, *My Father, &c.* intimate his *honouring* him as his *Father, Leader, Commander, Maſter*: as the *General* of the ſons of the Prophets [d], as the very *hoſt* and army of *Iſrael*; yea, as the *ſtrength* of their Army. Now what we highly eſteem, we will be much troubled for the loſs of.

[d] Elijah fuit dux gregis Prophetarum, 2 *King.* 2. 3. 5. Currus & equites conſtat præcipua eſſe belli robora, &c. *Pet. Mart. ad locum.*

2. *Eliſha* did not onely eſteem, but *dearly love Elijah*; and therefore alſo he doth ſo lament his removal. *Eliſha* burnt in love to *Elijah* (ſaith one) when he ſpake theſe words, *My father, my father!* as if ſome *ſpark* had fallen from *Elijahs* fiery Chariot into his *heart*. There is not a Child that can cry more after the breaſts that give it ſuck,

suck, then he calls and cries after his Father, *O my Father, my Father!* Where shall I find my Father? what will become of me without my Father? Now the taking away what we dearly love, goes very much unto our hearts: we find that *Jesus* himself wept for his friend *Lazarus* a; *At this the Jews said, Behold how he loved him!* Two *friends* joyned together in cordial love, cannot part without a *groan*; especially a *Scholar* and his *Master*, a *Son* and his *Father*. Shall not then *Elisha* be grieved at the very heart, when his beloved spiritual Father was taken away from him. So much for the opening of the words. The *Doctrine* that naturally ariseth from them is this;

a John 11. 35.

Doct. *That God taking away his* Elijah's *is matter of grief to his* Elisha's.

Gods *Elisha's* cannot but *mourn* when Gods *Elijah's* are *removed* from them, whether it be by a *natural* death, or any *other* death. This truth requires,

1. *Explication*,
2. *Confirmation*, but chiefly
3. *Application*.

1. For the *explication* of the sense and meaning of the Doctrine, two Questions must be answered;

1. *Who are Gods Elijah's?*
2. *Who are Gods Elisha's?*

Quest. 1. *Who are Gods Elijah's, whose taking away is such a grief of heart to Gods Elisha's?*

Answ. Elijah (according to *Hierome*) signifies *the Minister of Jehovah*; Gods *Elisha's* then are Gods Ministers, and such Ministers are Gods Ministers, who may be parallell'd with *Elijah*, though not in a parallel of *equality*, yet in a parallel of *conformity*. Gods *Elijah's* are Ministers like unto *Elijah* in the following particulars, wherein *Elijah* was *eminent* b.

b See Mr. *Caſe's* Sermon on Jam. 5. 17. p. 44. &c.

1. *Elijah* was *full of God*. In the name *Elijah*, there are *two* if not *three* of the *divine Names* included. And as his *name* was, so was *he*, full of God, *eminently godly*. Gods

Elijah's

Elijah's are onely such Ministers as are *partakers of the divine nature* [a]. a 2 Pet.1.4.

2. *God did in an eminent manner communicate his counsels, and reveal his secrets to* Elijah [b]; Gods *Elijahs* are onely such *Ministers* as are *anointed* with the *Holy Ghost*, *and taught by the spirit* [c]. b 2 King.1.17. --9 36.10.17. Mal. 4. 5. Mat.17.3. c 1 Joh. 2. 20.

3. Elijah *was a powerful Prophet* [d]; His very Name imports it: *Elijah* signifies *my strong God Jehovah*. He was not onely *mighty in deed*, but in *word*; he wrought *many* miracles, and by *one* Sermon he brought back many thousands of the Idolatrous Israelites to the worship of the true God [e]: *John Baptist*, because of his powerful preaching, is said to go before Christ *in the spirit and power of Elijah* [f]; Gods *Elijah's* are such Ministers, whose ministry is a *startling, awakening, humbling, warming, edifying* ministry; Converting Ministers are Gods *Elijah's* [g]. d 1 King. 17.14, 15,16. 2 King 1.12,14. 2.8. e 1 King. 18.39. f Luk. 1.17. g Mal. 4. 5.

4. *Elijah was very zealous for God and his pure worship, and against Baal, and all false worship.* He pleaded Gods cause against *Baal* and his *Priests* by *fire*; by a fire not to be obstructed, damped or quenched by all the effusion of water upon the sacrifice and Altar [h]: *Zeal* therfore for *God* and his *pure worship* against all *false worship*, and *halting* between *God* and *Baal*, is another Character of God's *Elijahs*. h 1 King.18.17. 19.10,14.

5. Elijah *was as couragious, as zealous.* He durst stand up for the Lord, even when he thought himself *alone* against the tide and torrent of the Apostacy of that generation, that was even turned *Baalist*: even then he appears and protests against them and their Idolatry, and Apostacy to their faces, and commands and sees execution to be done upon 450 Idolatrous Prophets, under the wing of an Idolatrous Queen, and before the very face of a wicked King [i]: Was not here courage even to a miracle? To be couragious for God in the worst of times is another character of God's *Elijahs*. i King.18.18,21, 22,40.---19.14.

6. Elijah *was eminent for tenderness of spirit* [k]. Though he was of so *stout* a spirit that he could *bare* any *wrong* and k 1 King. 19.10, 14.

and *injury* done to *himself*, yet he was of so *tender* a spirit, that he could *scace bare* the *dishonours* that in his time were brought *to the name of God*, the wrong and injuries that were offered to the *Saints* of the most high, and the dirt that was thrown upon Gods own *Ordinances*. Ministers of such a tender spirit are Gods *Elijah's* still.

7. Elijah *was much and mighty in Prayer*. The Scripture calls him *Israels Intercessor* [a]; *He prayed earnestly* [b]; He prayed in praying, a known Hebraisme: *Verbals added to Verbs is a kind of construction among the Hebrews, which implies vehemency*. Praying Ministers are still Gods *Elijah's*.

a Rom. 11.2.
b Jam. 5. 17. Προσευχῇ προσηυξατο.

8. Elijah *added Fasting to Prayer*; He fasted 40 dayes and 40 nights at one time [c]: Gods *Elijahs* still make conscience of joining these duties together.

c 1 King. 9.8.

9. Elijah *was so far from living to the world, that he hardly lived in the world*; his *fare* was *hard*, his *rayment course*; both *suitable* to a *wilderness*, wherein he chose to live among bruit *beasts*, rather then elsewhere among bruitish *men*. God's *Elijah's* are still *crucified to the world*.

10. And lastly, *Elijah was persecuted by Achab and Jezabel*; he was put to fly for his life [d]; he was one of those holy wanderers e the Scriptures *little book of Martyrs* makes mention of. To be persecuted by the world is another character of God's *Elijah's* [f]. Thus you see who are God's *Elijah's*. Now for God to take away either by a *natural*, or by a *civil* death, such *Ministers* as are *godly, intimate with God, powerful in preaching, zealous and courageous for the pure worship of God, and against all false worship; tender of the Name, and holy things of God; much in Prayer and Fasting; crucified to the world, and persecuted by the world*, is matter of much grief of heart to God's *Elisha's*. The next enquiry is,

d 1 King. 10.18. ---19.1,2,3.
e Heb. 11.37.

f Prædicare est nihil aliud, quam derivare in se furorem mundi. *Luth.*

Quest. 2. *Who are God's Elisha's? Who cannot but lay to heart Gods taking away of his Elijah's?*

Answ. Such Ministers and Christians as are like *Elisha* in

in grace and holiness; particularly, such as are of a *pitiful* temper, and *merciful* disposition: such was the frame of *Elisha's* spirit, as evidently appears by the many marks of mercy he did. Such as have any *bowels* of *pity* towards their *own* or *others souls*, or to the *place* where they *live*, or to the *land* of their *Nativity*, will herein imitate *Elisha* in lamenting Gods taking away such Ministers as are like unto *Elijah* in the former particulars, and therefore called God's *Elijah's*, as [a] *John* the Baptist was. In a word, *Gods saved ones* will be sure to lay to heart such a stroak. *Elisha* signifies *the salvation of God*, being derived of (*El*) *i.e.* God, and (*Jashag*) hath saved. Such as God hath saved from the *guilt* and *dominion* of sin, and *wrath* to come by the preaching of the Gospel, cannot but be much *afflicted*, when God *takes away* the *means* of salvation. But so much for the *explication* of the doctrine. The second thing undertaken is,

[a] Mal. 4. 5. Mat. 17. 10. 11. 11. 14.

2. *The confirmation of it.* And herein I shall give you onely the same reasons, for which *Elisha* did thus lament the taking away of *Elijah*.

1. There are the same *external* causes, why those that are like God's *Elishah's* should lament God's taking away such Ministers as are like *Elijah*, as there were why *Elisha* should lament God's taking away *Elijah*: Both their own *private* loss, and the *publick* loss of such Ministers should move them.

1. *Their own private loss.* Such Ministers as are like unto *Elijah*, are unto such Christians as are like unto *Elisha*, what *Elijah* was unto *Elisha*. They are their spiritual Fathers; No *Abraham* can more love his *Isaac*, then such Ministers *love* such Christians [b]; never was the most tender-hearted Father more careful to *provide* for his dear children, then such Ministers for such Christians. *They naturally care for the welfare of their souls* [c], as if they were led thereunto by inward *bowels* and a natural *instinct*; when such Ministers are taken away from such Christians, they are taken away, who either have *begotten* them again by the Gospel,

[b] 2 Cor. 11. 11. Phil. 1. 23, 24. 25.

[c] Phil. 2. 20.

a 1 Cor. 4. 15. as *Paul* had the *Corinthians* a; or if they were begotten by others, loved them as dearly, and cared for them as anxiously as the most loving Father his own Children b. Now the relation that is between a *Father* and a *Child* hath in it more of *love*, and more of *grief* than any other relation. When *Joseph* buried *Jacob* his Father c, *he mourned with a great and very sore lamentation.* It is sad to lose *a Jonathan*, sadder to lose a *Jacob*; sadder yet to lose *one Elijah*; but saddest of all to lose *many Elijahs*. Who can think of their Fitherly *bowels*, of their burning *love*, of their gracious *lips*, of their heart-searching, heart-melting, heart-warming, heart-purging, heart-clearing *Sermons*; of their unwearied *care* to feed and provide for the everlasting welfare of souls; to defend and protect them from all errors, superstitions, idolatries, corruptions, to reprove and correct any thing amiss in them; not onely to give them good counsel, but good example of their cordialness in *blessing* souls in the name of the Lord; and not cry out, *Ah our father! Ah our glory!* Can a *Father*, can *Fathers* be *parted* with without *sighs*, yea *tears*? Can the child hold it self from crying when it wants the breast that used to feed it? Thus their own *private* loss moves them.

b 1 Thes. 2. 7.

c Gen. 50. 10.

2. The *publick* loss moves them much more. Such Ministers are not onely to such *Christians* what *Elijah* was unto *Elisha*, but they are unto *Kingdoms* what *Elijah* was unto *Israel*, *The Chariots and horsemen thereof*. Good *men*, especially good *Ministers*, are next to *God*, and good *Angels*, the *walls and bulwarks of a Nation*. *If was by a Prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a Prophet was he preserved* d, saith the Prophet *Hosea*, *q. d.* Now you care not for the Lords Prophets, *&c.* but remember there was a time when a Prophet stood you in stead. If you did but regard your own temporal welfare, you would not slight the Lords Prophets: What had become of you in *Egypt*, and in the *wilderness*, had it not been for a poor despised Prophet among you? God's *Elijah's* are still unto Nations and Kingdoms

d Hos. 12. 13. V. Bur. ad locum.

doms instead of *Armies*; they are so many *Davids worth ten thousand of the people* [a]. One calls them in the *Platonists* phrase; Φύλακες & κόσμου, *the keepers of the world*, that preserve it from being made like to *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*. Seeing then good Ministers are such *publick good* [b], should not good *publick spirited* Christians mourn heartily for Gods taking them away? Hereby not onely *Souls* are (in a sense) left *Orphans*; but *Kingdoms* are left *unguarded*, without walls and bulwarks, deprived of their *Tutelar-Angels*. Thus you see there are the same *external* causes.

2. There are the same *Internal* causes still, why God's *Elijah's* should be lamented by God's *Elisha's*. The esteems that God's *Elisha's* still have of God's *Elijah's*, and the *affections* they bear unto them, will not suffer God's *Elijah's* to be taken away from them, unlamented by them. God's *Elisha's* are still moved,

1. By their *esteems* of God's *Elijah's*; good souls have still the same esteems of good Ministers, as *Elisha* had of *Elijah*. They esteem them as the *greatest* gift, as the *best* gift that ever Christ gave unto souls, next unto *himself*, and his *spirit* [c]. *They esteem them highly, very highly for their work sake* [d], for their office sake; and therefore cannot but be very much troubled for Gods taking them away. Thus they are moved by their *esteems*: They are also moved,

2. By their *Loves* for God's *Elijahs*: good souls have still the same affections for good Ministers, as *Elisha* had for *Elijah*; and that both for the *good* they have done their *own* and *others Souls*, and for their being so instrumental for the good of *Kingdoms*. Good Christians cannot but dearly love their *spiritual Fathers*, and those that are *under God* the great *saviours of Churches and States* from ruine. They have the same loves for them, which the *Galathians* had for the Apostle *Paul* [e]. Can we then wonder, if they be very much troubled for Gods taking away such useful instruments, that the lights of the world should be put out;

[a] 2 Sam. 18. 3.

[b] See five reasons why good Ministers are the greatest safety to a Nation, in Mr. *Obad. Sedgwicks* Sermon on this Text at the Fun. of Mr. *Strong*. As also four reasons, why godly men (and therefore much more godly Ministers) are the best munition in Mr. *Fitz-Geoffry's* Sermon on this Text.

[c] Eph. 4. 8. 11, 12, 13.

[d] 1 Thes. 5. 12.

[e] Gal. 4. 14, 15.

That their Sun should go down at Noon [a], *that the foundations should be destroyed* [b], *that the desire of their eyes should be taken away* [c], that their dearly beloved, and greatly delighted in, should be removed from them? This made the Elders of *Ephesus*, and other Believers, at their parting from *Paul*, to weep, and to weep sore, and that universally, *they all wept sore* [d]; because they dearly loved him, which they expressed most pathetically in *falling upon his neck, and kissing him*. But so much for the Reasons of the Doctrine; The third and last thing undertaken is the *Application*, and therefore,

III. The usefulness of this Doctrine is next to be evinced, and that (omitting several uses that may be made of it) by considering it, as

1. *A Bill of Indictment*,
2. *A Call from Heaven*.

Use 1. This Doctrine is *a black Bill of Indictment* against two sorts of offenders,

1. Against those that are at any time any ways guilty of the death of God's *Elijah's*, whether they die by a *civil*, or by a *natural* death.

1. This Doctrine is a black Bill of Indictment against those that are at any time guilty of the *civil* deaths of any of God's *Elijahs*. Not onely the *principals* in, but all the *accessories* to the *silencing* of godly Ministers are worthy of sharp rebuke, whether they be accessory *a parte ante*, or *a parte post*; for so many ways we may be accessory to anothers sin. *A parte ante*, before it be committed, by *commanding* it, by *advising* to it, by *inciting* to it, and by *not hindring* it as much as we might [e]. *A parte post*, after the sin is committed, by not *mourning* for it; by not *reproving* it in *word* or *deed*; by *liking and approving* of it; by *defending* it, by *delighting* in the *company* of the *principals*, and by *imitating* of them [f]. All these are guilty of murthering God's *Elijah's*; they are guilty of the blood of spiritual Fathers, of the Chariots and Horsemen of *Israel*. To clear this,

a Amos 8.9.
b Psal 11.3.
c Ezek.24.16.
d Act.20.37.
e 2 Sam. 12.9. compared with Ch.11.15. Act.4.10.1 Tim. 2.14. 1 Sam. 3. 13.
f 1 Cor. 5. 2. Lev. 5.1. Eph.5. 11. 1 King 21.19. Act.8.1.--22.20. 2 Joh. 11. Jude 20. Isa. 9. 16. --5 20. Ezek. 13. 10.18. 1 Cor. 5. 6. Mat.23.34,35, 36.

this, consider that the killing of Christs witnesses, prophesied of in the *Revelation* [a], is to be understood *metaphorically*, or *analogically* of a *civil* death, and not *literally* of a *corporal* death. The killing is a killing them as *witnesses*, and not as *men*: it is a throwing them out of their places and stations, as if they were naturally dead. This is evident, both because their bodies are said *to lie dead and unburied three years and an half*; and because after that time, *there shall be a resurrection of them* [b], but no resurrection, properly so called, shall come to pass before Christs coming.

[a] Rev. 11. 7.

[b] Rev. 11. 8, 11.

2. This Doctrine is a black Bill of Indictment against those that are at any time guilty of the *corporal* deaths of any of God's *Elijahs*: such (I mean) as take the direct course to take away the natural lives of God's *Elijahs*, especially of his *silenc'd Elijah's*, by *sadding*, yea, *breaking* their *hearts* by their *unprofitableness*, *unfruitfulness*, *unthankfulness*, *incorrigibleness*, *impenitency*, *unreformedness*, *unpersuadableness to hear the voice of the Rod*, *Gospel-unbecoming conversations*, *apostacies*, *backslidings*, &c. All such are guilty of making the hearts of those sad, whom God would not have sad; yea they are guilty of murthering their Fathers. *We live* (saith the Apostle [c]) *if ye stand fast in the Lord*, *q. d.* Notwithstanding all our miseries, though death be present before us, we are healthful and chearful so long as you walk as becometh the Gospel; so long as you are zealous for God, his truths and waies, and so persevere whatever you meet with. The Apostle clearlie implies, that *nothing is more killing to Gods faithful Ministers, then the backslidings of their people.* I need say no more, if we had but the same thoughts of blood-guiltiness, which *David* had, when he cried out, *Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God* [d]: In the Hebrew it is from bloods. Verily in every *drop* of blood there is a *tongue* crying for vengeance. What is there then in the bloud of an *Abel*? What is there in the blood of an *Elijah*? What is there in the blood of many *Elijahs*? But so much for those that are any waies guilty

[c] 1 Thes. 3. 8.

[d] Psal. 51. 14.

of

of the deaths of any of God's *Elijah's* at any time. The Doctrine is also a black Bill of Indictment.

2. Against those who do not lay to heart the *proper* or *figurative* deaths of any of God's *Elijah's* at any time. Many have spoken of their proper deaths; I shall speak onely of their figurative or civil deaths. Now when God suffers any of his *Elijah's* to be silenced, they do not lay it to heart, that come under any of the following ranks.

1. Such as are *merry* and do *rejoice* when any, especially when many godlie, annointed, powerful, zealous, courageous, tender, praying, fasting, mortified and persecuted Ministers have their mouths stopt; and that because then they shall no more be reproved by them in publick, nor hear any of the threats, and curses of God denounced against them for any of their iniquities. These have the *mark of the beast* upon them. The Holy Ghost stigmatizeth Antichrists Brats with this character; *They*, upon the slaughter of Christs witnesses, *rejoyce and make merry, and send gifts one unto another, because those that tormented them be taken away*[a]. I have read, that upon the news of the *French Massacre*, which began on *Bartholomew* day, a *Jubilee* was proclaimed in *Rome*. To be sure the last slaughter of Christs witnesses will fill all the Popish world with rejoycings, that they are rid and avenged of those who vexed and troubled their consciences. But the comfort is, *their joy will be but short*[b]. *This iniquity shall not be purged away till you die*[c]. O the dreadfulness and direfulness of that doom, passed by God himself upon these wretches, and bound with an oath to make it irrevocable, that this hideous wickedness shall by no means be expiated.

[a] Rev. 11. 10.

[b] Isa. 22. 12, 13, 14.

[c] See Mr. *Gataker* in the large Annot. on the place.

2. Such also, who *reproach* the Lords silenced Ministers, and trample upon these dead Lions, and *jear* the Lords people for their sorrow in such a day of *Sions* rebuke[d]: Among whom it is to the reproach of Saints[e], that they weep, and fast, and humble themselves for provoking God to suffer their *Elijah's* to be silenced. *Against whom* (saith God

[d] Lam. 3. 60, 61, 62, 63.

[e] Psal. 69. 10, 11, 12.

God a to such) *do ye sport your selves? against whom do ye make a wide mouth, &c? Are ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood?* If a *child* hath lost his *Father*, he thinks that Nature doth not onely *justifie*, but *command* his tears. The loving *wife* cannot part with her dear *husband* without *sighs*, yea *tears*. No *Kingdom* can part with their *Chariots and Horsemen*, their Bulwarks, without *lamentation*. And shall not *Christians*, when God suffers his *Elijah's* to be taken away by a *civil* death, have liberty to mourn for the loss of their spiritual *Fathers*, of their spiritual *husbands*; such (I mean) as have *espoused them for Christ*? Shall not the *land* have leave to lament the loss of their *Chariots* and *horsemen*? Pray give losers leave to speak. a Isa. 57.4.

3. Such also, who remain *secure* and *fearless*, notwithstanding such a loud *alarm* from Heaven. When *Metellus* heard of the death of *Scipio Africanus*, he ran out into the publick *Forum*, or market place, and cried out, *O Citizens, come ye forth and consult what is to be done, for the walls of your City are fallen down.* Will not that *Heathen* rise up in judgment against secure *Professors*?

4. Such also, as do not *mourn* for, and *repent* of those *sins* of theirs, which have *stopped* the mouths of God's *Elijah's*. Hereby it was evident that *Pharoah* b was not sensible of God's Plague, because he neither humbled himself for, nor repented of the cause thereof. Under this rank come all those that are, 1. As *unthankful* for the Gospel and precious liberties they once enjoied as ever c; 2. As *barren* under the means of grace that are continued to them, as ever d; 3. As *weary* of those Ordinances that yet remain, as ever e; 4. As *lightly esteem* the *scarce*, and therefore much more *precious* Word, as ever f; And 5. *Grieve* the souls, and even *break* the hearts of Gods faithful Ministers by their disobedience and scandalous actions, as much as ever g. These, and such like, that still live in those sins, for which God hath so smitten them, evidence by their impenitency. b Exod. 7.13. c Isa. 1.2,8. d Isa. 5.46. e Amos 8.5,11. f 1 Sam 3.2. g 2 Chro. 36.16.

penitency their not laying to heart Gods ſore ſtroake. *Thou haſt ſtricken them, but they have not grieved; thou haſt conſumed them, but they have refuſed to receive correction: they have made their faces harder then a rock, they have refuſed to return*[a].

[a] Jer. 5. 3.

5. All *prayerleſs* ſouls are alſo in this condemnation. *The people turneth not unto him that ſmiteth them, neither do they ſeek the Lord of Hoſts*[b]. The Lord ſendeth all afflictions for this very end, to beſpeak Prayer. *Is any among you afflicted, let him pray*[c]. But when he doth withdraw the tokens of his preſence from a people, he doth in an eſpecial manner beſpeak Prayer. *I will go and return unto my place, till they acknowledg their offence, and ſeek my face*[d]. Such therefore do not hear the voice of ſuch a Rod, who reſtrain Prayer whileſt they are under it. The word rendred to reſtrain, (*Job* 15. 4.) ſignifies both to withdraw or ſtop, and to leſſen or diminiſh, as (*Jer.* 48. 37.) *every beard reſtrained*, i. e. clipt or diminiſhed; It is true here in both ſenſes. They are in this condemnation who either totally *forbear*, and *throw up* the duty of Prayer, or who *ſhorten* and *abate* it, whileſt under ſuch an hand of God. Yea,

[b] Iſa 9. 13.

[c] Jam. 5. 13.

[d] Hoſ. 5. 15.

[a] יגר Significat & ademit & minuit. Prohibitionem & defectum. Schindl. in Verbum. Eſt prohibere & diminuere. Mare. in Pagn.

6. Such alſo, as do not *pray better* than ever. *If any among you be afflicted, let him pray*[f], i. e. let him be more then ordinary in Prayer; let him not pray, as he is to pray at other times; let him pray more ſeriouſly, more humbly, more earneſtly, more conſtantly. *O Lord, in trouble they have viſited thee, they have poured forth a prayer, when thy chaſtening was upon them*[g]. They did not *drop*, but *pour* out, and not *prayers*, but a *prayer*, as if their praying were a continual act. *In their affliction they will ſeek me early*[h], *i. e.* timely, earneſtly, diligently, accurately, anxiouſly, inflamedly.

[f] Jam. 5. 13.

[g] Iſa. 26. 16.

[h] Hoſ. 5. 15.

Queſt. *But what ſhould Chriſtians under ſuch a ſad providence thus ſeek unto God for?*

Anſw.

Anſw. 1. *For acquaintance with the why of ſuch a Rod*: This none but God can teach. It is his *Meſſenger*, and comes on his *errand*. If a King ſendeth a Meſſenger to us, we are reſtleſs till we know the end of his Meſſage: many times the ignorance of the cauſe of an affliction doth more afflict, than the affliction it ſelf. 2. *For a bleſſing upon the Rod*, that like *Aarons* rod it may bud and bloſſom. The *Rod* is an *Ordinance* as well as the *Word*. *Good* by any Rod comes not from the *rod it ſelf*, but the *God of the rod*, who onely can make *corrections*, *inſtructions*, and therefore to be thus ſought from God onely. 3. *For preſervation from the ſins that ſuch a rod doth* (without Gods bleſſing) *in an eſpecial manner expoſe ſouls to*: ſuch as fretfulneſs, riſings of heart in way of revenge againſt the inſtruments, diſtruſt of God, ſinking deſpondencies, and heartleſneſs to the work of God in private. 4. *For the ſupplying of the want of publick teaching with the teachings of his ſpirit, and of other company with his own company.* 5. *To acquit God from dealing hardly with his people notwithſtanding*, and to acknowledg that yet God is, not onely *righteous*, but *good* unto *Iſrael*. 6. *For guidance and directions how to manage aright thoſe graces, that are moſt ſeaſonable under ſuch a rod*; which cannot be without wiſdom from above [b]. 7. and laſtly, *For the removing of the rod*, which is a Meſſenger ſent by God, and will not away till that God that gave a commiſſion both for its coming, and ſtay, biddeth it be gone. *It is one of the worſt frames to pray earneſtly for pardon of ſin, while we deſire to live in it; and it is one of the beſt frames to pray earneſtly for the removal of the croſs, and to be willing to bear it as long as the Lord pleaſeth.* So much for the *6th.* ſort of inſenſible ſouls under ſuch a judgment, *viz.* ſuch as are not *oftner* and more *fervent* in prayer for *Zion* after ſuch a ſtroak, then they were before; ſuch as do not go the oftner, and the more importunately to the *Fountain* when the *ſtreams* are cut off; ſuch as do not cry out with *David*, *Help Lord, for the godly man ceaſeth*,

[a] Job 10. 2.

[b] Jam. 1. 5.

Pſal. 12. 1.

the faithful fail from among the children of men.

7. And laſtly, Such as do not *live bettter* than ever. Certainly ſuch a Rod is ſent for the *bettering* of peoples *lives*, as well as of their *prayers*.

Queſt. *Wherein?*

Anſw. 1. That they may live more *mercifully* [a]: At ſuch a time they have more objects of mercy, and thoſe not ordinary objects. 2. That they may live more *thankfully*. *In thoſe dayes the word of the Lord was precious* [b]. What dayes were thoſe? It followeth: *There was no open Viſion.* Word, and Prophets *were precious* when they *were not* [c]. 3. That they may live more *ſelf-denyingly*. At ſuch a time they muſt more then ordinarily deny their own eaſe, name, liberty, livelihood, &c. if they will enjoy the Word. 4. That [d] they may live more *humbly*. Then they have an opportunitie of knowing more of their own hearts, of the weakneſs of their graces, of the ſtrength of their corruptions, &c. which is of great uſe to humble them, to lay them even in the duſt. 5. That they may live more *with God*, even (in a ſenſe) in immediate communion with God, the leſs mediate communion they can have. 6. and laſtlie, That they may live more *upon God*. Such a diſpenſation gives faith, as well as patience, its perfect work: Of ſuch a time it is ſaid, *Here is the faith, and the patience of the Saints* [e]. Thoſe are the pureſt acts of faith which the ſoul puts forth in the dark [f]. The perfect work of Faith is to believe in God, when the ſoul hath nothing to ſtay it ſelf upon, but God. He dies oft, whoſe life is bound up in any dying creature. He onely lives an unchangeable life, that by faith lives upon an unchangeable God. If ſouls be not thus bettered in their lives, the rod is loſt on them. Now to all theſe this Doctrine ſends two very ſad Meſſages. It aſſures them,

1. *Their wickedneſs is very great.*
2. *Their condition is very bad.*

1. *Their wickedneſs is very great.* It is a *great* ſin not to lay to heart God's taking away any one gracious man or

[a] Haud ignara mali miſeris ſuccurrere diſco. *Virg.*

[b] 1 Sam 3 1.

[c] Carendo potius quam fruendo. *& c. Sen. Ep.*

[d] Deut. 8. 2.

Rev. 13. 10.

Iſa. 50. 10.

or woman; it is a *greater* not to lay to heart Gods taking away any one faithful Minister; it is *much greater* not to lay to heart Gods taking away many faithful Ministers: it is *yet worse* not to lay to heart their taking away in their prime, in the time of improvement; not to lay to heart the going down of the Sun even in the morning: it is *yet worse* not to lay to heart their taking away in such times, wherein there is most need and use of them to prevent the Apostacie of people, and the spreading of superstition, error, and prophaneness. What is it then not to lay to heart their taking away in such times, if our own faithful Ministers be among those whom God so takes away? This wickedness argues want of love. 1. *To Christs faithful Ministers.* Doth the *Woman* love her *Husband*, the *Child* his *Father*, that is not grieved at parting? And doth he love Christ himself, that loves not his faithful Ministers? 2. To their own souls: *He that thus sinneth against Christ* in his Ministry, *hateth his own soul, and loves death*[a]. 3. *To the land of their nativity*, which is as *Sampson* with his *locks cut*, when Gods faithful Ministers have their *mouthes stopt*. *Hippo* and *Heidelberg* were soon tumbled into their Graves, after the removal of their Ministers.

[a] Prov. 8. 36.

2. *Their condition is very bad.* Hereby it is evident, that they are none of God's *Elisha's*. *Elisha* signifies (as I have hinted already) *saved by God*. Souls insensible of the loss of God's *Elijah's* are none of Gods *saved ones*: They are not saved from the guilt and dominion of sin, and from wrath to come; and if they be none of God's *saved ones*, they will undoubtedlie (unless repentance prevent) be some of the *damned ones*. Profane and reprobate *Esaus*[c] onelie sin away soul-mercies, and continue eating and drinking, and slighting what is done. But so much for the usefulness of this Doctrine, as it is a *Bill of Indictment*.

[c] Gen. 25. 34.

Use 2. This Doctrine is also *a loud call from Heaven* to mourning and lamentation, and that both from,

1. *God's Eliſha's*, and
2. *God's Elijah's.*

1. *This Doctrine is a Call from Heaven to God's Eliſha's to mourn and lament, when God takes away any of his Elijah's by a civil death.* I have already ſhewed that ſuch as are indeed and in truth *God's Eliſha's*, they will mourn and lament at ſuch a time: I ſhall now ſhew *that* they ought ſo to do, and *why*?

1 That *God's Eliſha's* ought to mourn and lament whenever *God* ſuffers his *Elijah's* to be ſilenced. And here I ſhall anſwer two queſtions,

1. What ought to be the *extent*?
2. What ought to be the *limitations* of their grief and ſorrow?

Queſt. *What ought to be the extent of God's* Eliſha's *grief and ſorrow, when God takes away his* Elijah's *by a civil death?*

Anſw. 1. *Their ſorrow ſhould ſeize upon their hearts.* Their grief ſhould be *ſorrow of heart*, as *Nehemiah's* was [a]; *Their bowels, their bowels ſhould be troubled, they ſhould be pained to the heart* [b], as Chriſt's was, when he beheld the ſhepherdleſs people [c]. Their very *hearts* ſhould even be *broken*, as in all probability *Eli's* was (even whileſt his *neck* was *unbroken*) at the tidings of the *Arks* being *taken* [d]. Their ſorrow ſhould be *ſerious* and *ſincere*, mourning more for their ſouls loſs hereby, then for any loſs of *their* outward man, or of *theirs*: Their grief ſhould not be in *pangs* onely, but *habitual*. They ſhould be in a mourning frame continually, and the *longer* the cauſe of their ſorrow continues, the *deeper* impreſſions ſhould be made upon their hearts. The loſs of faithful Miniſters is like the loſs of a good Husband, or of a good Wife, *leaſt at firſt*: *Paſſionate* ſorrow may be working moſt at *firſt*, but *rational* ſorrow moſt *afterwards*. The longer *God's Elijah's* are under the loſs, the deeper reſentment they ſhould have thereof.

a Nehem. 2. 2.
b Jer. 4. 5. 6.
c Matth. 9 36.
d 1 Sam. 4. 18.

Anſw.

Answ. 2. *Their sorrow should reach their outward man.* The grief of their hearts should be outwardly expressed: [a] 1. *In tears.* Hearty *mourners* must, yea will, be *weepers.* There are two sorts of tears required of God's *Elishas*, one of *Compassion*, the other of *Humiliation*; the former for the *miseries* both of God's *Elijah's*, and of God's *Elisha's*; the later for the *sins* that brought those miseries. These *tears* must *spring* from a *broken* heart, as *Josiah's* did [b]; All other tears are like water from a *dead pit* that is *drawn forth* with engins, not like water from a *living fountain*, that *flows* naturally. Thus all God's *Elisha's* should labour to express the grief of their hearts, but this they do not all attain to: with some, *tears* are *scarce*, though *groans* are *plentiful.* Such have a *rational* sorrow, though not a *passionate* sorrow; such have the inward tears (as *Austin* calls sighs) though not the outward tears.

[a] See Engl. Remembrancer, p. 431, &c.

[b] 2 Chron. 34. 27.

2. *In taking none ore little comfort in any worldly comfort, so long as the cause of sorrow continueth.* God's *Elisha's* should be like the wife of *Phinehas*, who set not her heart on the tidings of a male-child, wen the Ark was taken [c]; Alas! what joy can God's *Elisha's* take in children, when they suspect whether they shall leave them a Gospel or no? They may write (saith one) *Ichabod* upon the children born in their houses in the time, when God seems to be breaking up house among them.

[c] 1 Sam. 4. 21, 22.

3. *In earnestly desiring the removal of such a judgment.* One of the daughters of godly sorrow is vehement desire. *Behold this self same thing that ye sorrowed after a godly manner, and what vehement desire it wrought in you* [d]? No mercy on this side Christ, and grace should be more planted after by God's *Elisha's* at such a time, then the restoring of Gods faithful Ministers to their Congregations, and the unstopping of their mouthes in a lawful way.

[d] 2 Cor. 7. 11.

4. In *crying mightily unto God for the removal of this judgment.* They should be like *David* [e], who did not onely *thirst*, and *long to see Gods power and glory, as he had*

[e] Psal. 63. 1, 2.

had ſeen him in the ſanctuary, but ſaith, *this will I ſeek after*.

a Pſal. 27. 4.

5. *In adding faſting unto praying; eſpecially in making the dayes on which ſuch a calamity doth befal them, Faſting dayes, if not together, yet aſunder.* The laſt of the fifth month, which *Iſrael* kept was for the burning of the Temple [b]. If ever the Sons of *Levi* weep apart, and their wives apart, it ſhould be at ſuch a time [c].

b Compare Zech. 7. 3. with Jer. 52. 12.

c Zech. 12. 12, 13, 14.

6. and laſtly, *In adding reformation unto all. Humiliation* without *reformation* is like the Word of God in the *letter*, which *kills* and not *quickens*, which *accents* ſin, and not *leſſons* it, which *continues* judgment, and not *removes* it. It is not enough for God's *Eliſha's* to be troubled for the ſilencing of God's *Elijah's*; but when God's *Elijah's* are ſilenced, they muſt be up and doing the more in private. When *Iſrael* wanted their *Smiths*, they muſt then with more diligence uſe their *Files*. They ſhould improve every occaſional viſit for ſoul-advantage, and turn *civil converts* into *Chriſtian communion*, as the Diſciples did upon the loſs of their Maſter [d]. When they meet, they ſhould be loth to part without praying together, though they be but two or three. The joint prayer of ſo few hath a ſpecial promiſe of audience [e]. They ſhould be much at *home* [f], communing with their own hearts, and examining themſelves, and much in the *cloſet*, both in prayer, and reading, and meditating upon what they read. Yea, ſuch *Eliſha's* as are Parents, and Maſters of Families ſhould be inſtead of *Elijah's* to their children and ſervants, not forgetting their neighbours ſouls. In a word, in all private duties they ſhould avoid what they miſlike in the publick worſhip at ſuch a time, *viz.* formality, drineſs, dulneſs, ſtraitneſs, ſapleſneſs, *&c.* as being *double* ſins both againſt the *precept* of God, and againſt the *Providence* of God. But ſo much for anſwer to the firſt Queſtion, The ſecond is,

d Luke 24. 17.

e Matth. 18. 19.

f Pſal. 4. 4. Lam. 3. 40.

Queſt. 2. *What limitations of the grief and ſorrow of God's Eliſha's at ſuch a time are to be obſerved?*

Anſw.

Anſw. 1. They ſhould *mourn* but not *murmur*; they ſhould *ſmite upon their own thighs*, but not *blame Providence*: *Miſery* is an excuſe for *Paſſion*; *the greatneſs of ſufferings* gives no allowance to the *exorbitances of Paſſion*. In *the very place of Dragons* there is ſomewhat to check *murmuring*. Let God's *Eliſha's* take heed of entertaining one hard thought of God. *Yet God is good to Iſrael*[a].

[a] Pſal. 73. 1.

2. They ſhould *mourn*, but not *revenge*. Revenge is ſo ſweet a ſin to corrupted nature, that ſome have found more ſweetneſs in it then in life it ſelf[b]; but the Apoſtolical rule is[c], *Recompence to no man evil for evil*: and again, *Dearly beloved, avenge not your ſelves, but rather give place unto wrath*: Not to our own, for then we *give place to the Devil*[d]; but either to the wrath of your enemies, or to the wrath of God, as it followeth; *For it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, ſaith the Lord, q. d.* If you take upon you to avenge your ſelves, you take Gods work out of his hands. Let God's *Eliſha's* therefore look at God in ſuch a Providence. Man onely ſeen in it will breed wrath, indignation, and revenge; but when God is ſeen in it, that will breed humiliation.

[b] At vindicta bonum vitâ jucundiùs ipſâ.

[c] Rom. 12. 17, 19.

[d] Eph. 4. 26, 27.

3. They ſhould *mourn*, but *not unto themſelves*[e]. Their outward loſſes may help to *raiſe* the waters, but they muſt take heed they be not the *head and ſpring*. In ſuch occaſions of ſorrow, they ſhould be ſure to fall upon ſin, their own iniquity rather then the wickedneſs of thoſe that ſilence ſuch Miniſters.

[e] Zach. 12, 13.

4. and laſtly, They ſhould *mourn*, but ſhould not be *caſt down*: *Why art thou caſt down O my ſoul*[f]? The queſtion puts it out of all queſtion, that there never is any good reaſon why Saints ſhould be caſt down. Even in ſuch occaſions of ſorrow, they ſhould not mourn (as one ſaith well[g]) as thoſe that are without *preſent ſtayes*, and *future hopes*. Though at ſuch a time there is a great alteration as to the *means* of grace, there is no change in the *covenant* of grace.

[f] Pſal. 42. 11. —43. 5.

[g] Eng. Rhem. pa. 472, 473.

Their

Their *Teacher* is *where he was*, though their *teachers* be *removed*. It is he that taught them *by* their teachers, and he can teach them *without* them. Formerly they had cauſe to *magnifie* him, becauſe he did all by the inſtruments; and then they have to *omnifie* him, that can be unto them inſtead of all inſtruments. Even all that they have loſt may be found in that one title of Chriſt, *The great Shepherd of the ſheep* [a]. They may find a *Temple* in the *Lamb* [b]; *I will be as a little Sanctuary* [c], *i. e.* I will be inſtead of your City-walls, and your Temple priviledges. Though at ſuch a time Chriſts faithful Miniſters be as dry bones, yet the Prophet *Ezekiel* [d] dare not conclude againſt dry bones living. When Gods witneſſes are ſlain, they are not naturally dead, and there will be a Reſurrection of them. Thus you ſee *how* God's *Eliſha's* are to mourn at ſuch a time. I come now to ſhew,

a Heb. 13. 20.
b Rev. 21. 22.
c Ezek. 11. 16.
d Ezek. 37. 3, 11, 12.

2. *Why* they are then thus to mourn; and here I ſhall give God's *Eliſha's* ſome motives to ſtir them up unto their duty, taken from the *evil* of not mourning thus, and from the *good* of thus mourning.

1. From the *evil* of not mourning thus; It is a bad *ſign*, and a bad *cauſe*.

1. *It is a bad ſign.* It ſignifies 1. That their affections towards their *Elijah's*, whileſt their mouths were opened, were either not *true*, or very *weak*. How ſhould one meaſure the *degree* or *truth* of our *affections*, but by the *ſtrength* or *truth* of our *afflictions* in the removal of what we pretend to affect. 2. That the reſurrection of ſuch *Elijah's* will not be in much mercy to ſuch *Eliſha's*. The *word* reſtored to *unhumbled hearts* is as *ſeed* caſt upon *unbroken ground*; it is *thrown away*, and not *ſown* [e].

e Jer. 4. 3.

2. *It is a bad cauſe*; ſome dreadfull outward, if not ſpiritual judgment is its certain effect. Thoſe that are *at eaſe in Zion, that are not grieved for the affliction*

of

of Joseph, that are not sick at heart (as the words signifie) for the sufferings of God's *Israel*, *shall go captive with the first that go captive* [a]; in the Hebrew it is, they shall be in the head of those that go captive. But so much for present of the motives taken from the *evil* of not mourning; the second head of motives is taken,

From the *good* of thus mourning; It is both a good *evidence*, and a good cause.

1. *It is a good evidence.* It evidenceth, That such are real *members* of Christs mystical *body*. A Christians, a right Christians *face* may be seen in these *waters* of sorrow. Such are *Elisha's*: *I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn Assemblies which are of thee* [b].

2. *It is a good cause*: for God is engaged *to gather such*. The reverend Author of that excellent Sermon on *Zeph.* 3. 18. in Engl. Remembr. p. 449, 450. observes very much to be contained in that promise; *viz. Preservation* in dispersions; *restauration* after their dispersions; that they shall meet in their *own places* again, *Neh.* 1. 9. *Isa.* 43. 5, 6. *Jer.* 31. 10, 11. Yea, in their *solemn assemblies* again, *Jer.* 23. 4. *Ezek.* 34. 12, 13, 14. *Psal.* 147. 2. Yea, *restitution* for the losses of their mercies, *Ezek.* 36. 11. there shall be more *purity* of Ordinances then formerly, *Ezek.* 36. 11.--11. 16, 17, 18. more *glory*, Hag. 2. 7, 9. more *power* and *efficacy*, Mic. 4. 6, 7. more *condescention*, and larger testimonies of acceptation, *Ezek.* 20. 40, 41.--39. 29. more *unity*, Ezek. 37, 21, 22.--11. 19. *Jer.* 32. 37, 38, 39. more *security*, Ezek. 34. 27. and more *honour*, and *reputation*, *Zeph.* 3. 19, 20. *Isa.* 61. 7. What can be said more? And now shall none of these considerations (though they be but few of what might be urged [c]) prevail with God's *Elisha's* to lay to heart such a sad providence, when God suffers his *lights* to be put under *Bushels*; his

[a] See *Trap* upon *Amos*, 6. 6, 7.

[b] Zeph. 3. 18. Hi sunt tui veteri (O Ecclesia) & germani partus. *Jun.*

[c] See *Engl. Remembr.* p. 457. to 462.

his *stars* to be removed from their *Orbs*[a]; the *eyes* of bewildred souls to be *put out*? God forbid: sure, when *they* cannot hear the *joyful sound*, both God and *men* should hear their *sorrowful sighs and groans*. They know little of the reality of spiritual relations, whose hearts are not touched with the sense of spiritual breaches. Are God's *Elisha's* Fathers dead? Is *Israels* best munition departed? and shall not they cry out, *O our Fathers, our Fathers! the Chariots of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof!*

[a] Some have thought it more eligible to lose the *Sun* then such *stars*.

Quest. *But how may God's* Elisha's *get and encrease this frame of spirit at such a time?*

Answ. 1. *Let them set before their eyes God's mourners as patterns for their imitation.* Man is a *docile* creature, more apt to be led by the *eye*, then the *ear*. The ancient Saints are called *a cloud of witnesses*[b]. A *Cloud*, because there is a leading vertue in their examples. *Call for the mourning women, and let them teach you lamentation*[c].

[b] Heb. 12.1.

[c] Jer. 9.17,20.

Answ. 2. *Let them go about such a loss, and cast up what it comes to.* If they *dissect* it, they will find it a *big bellied* evil. One calls it a whip of many cords, wherewith God's *Elijah's* are whipped out of the Temple. O that God's *Elisha's* at such a time would scourge themselves with the considerations that offer themselves to them, when they sit down to tell the aggravations and heightning circumstances of their misery. Let them think particularly[d] of the *nature, degree, cause, time, concomitants*, and *consequents* of such a judgment. For the *nature* of it, it is a *spiritual* loss; the great loss is unto souls: and it is a *common* loss; the *Administers* of the Word are set out by *common* blessings, as *light, salt, harvest-men, bread*, &c.

[d] Singularia pungunt.

The

The removal therefore of such is a *common* mischief. For the *degree*, it is to be considered whether *one Elijah* be taken away, or *more then one*; whether *few*, or *many*, whether *some* or *all*? For the *cause*; the affliction is a *great* evil *in it self*, but *greater* in its *cause*. It argues that the *greatest* evil, sin, is in that people from whom God takes away his *Elijah's*; yea, that sin abounds there [a]. For the *time* is to be minded, whether this judgment falls upon them when *Popish*, *Socinian*, and *Arminian errors*, and all manner of *looseness* and *debauchery* are coming in as a *flood*? For the *concomitants*; *When the shepherds are smitten, the sheep are scattered*: and what will the scattered sheep do? What will the *coals* do when they are pulled one from another? When God takes away his faithfull Ministers from a people, he takes away from them the *life* of their *lives*, the *comfort* of all their *enjoyments*; for when the *Ministry* is sent *packing*, *God* himself is sent *packing*; yea, when Gods faithful Ministers are silenced, people cannot worship God *publickly*, nor enjoy Gods Ordinances long in *private*. Now not onely God himself, but his Ordinances are our life. Some [b] think the land of *Canaan* is in an especial manner called *the land of the living*, in respect of the Ordinances. In a word, reproach is another attendant of this affliction; then *Israel* is a derision to *Moab*, and they even skip for joy [c]. And should not God's *Elisha's weep*, when they have brought themselves into such a condition, as makes their enemies *laugh* [d]. Lastly, for the *consequents* of such a judgment; certainly such an extraordinary judgment (as an extraordinary *eclipse*) is very *ominous*: it prognosticks sadly, as if Gods work were done as to treating with many souls [e]; as if God would take no farther care of his Vineyard [f]: as if reformation should end in deformation: Is it not ominous to have the *Midwives* taken

[a] Lam. 5. 16.

[b] *V. Muller*, in Psal. 27. 13.

[c] Jer. 48. 26.

[d] Lam. 3. 60, 61, 62. Neh. 1. 4. --4. Psal. 42. 3. --10. --69. 19. --80. 5. 6. --89. 50, 51. --123. 3, 4. Isa. 52. 5. Ezek. 35. 12, 13.

[e] Hos. 4. 7.

[f] Isa. 5. 5, 6.

away before the Church hath *brought forth*? Yea, it ſpeaks as if the ſoreſt judgments were at hand; not onely the worſt of outward judgments, ſword, famine, and Peſtilence, but the worſt of ſpiritual judgments: it ſpeaks a great Apoſtaſie at hand: when the *Standard-bearers* and *leaders* fall, will not the *Soldiers* fly? yea, it ſpeaks as if God would let men be as vile as they will. For God to ſuffer his faithful Miniſters, who teach ſouls to deny all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and to live godly, righteouſly and ſoberly, to be ſilenced; ſounds as much, as *he that will be unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill, and he that will be filthy, let him be filthy ſtill.* Let but theſe conſiderations be ſtricken on the heart, as the *rod* was by *Moſes* on the *rock*, and we may well conclude, the *heart* is a *rock* indeed, if it yield no *water*.

Anſw. 3. and laſtly, *Let them be reſtleſs after the pardon of all their iniquities, eſpecially thoſe that have ſtopt the mouths of God's* Elijah's. God's calls of his *Eliſha's* to mourning are very loud; but yet that is not enough, it muſt be a beam from the Sun of righteouſneſs, that will make even their eyes to run over, and diſſolve even their too too hard hearts. *Peter* ſtirred not at the *Crowing* once and again, until Chriſt *look'd* upon him, *then he went out and wept bitterly.* Let God's *Eliſha's* therefore at ſuch a time beg a gracious look from God, that though he hath his *back* upon them, yet that he would be pleaſed to *look back* upon them: let them tell the Lord that their hearts are ſo hard, that all the conſiderations that aggravate the judgment, are not ſufficient to break them: let them take words, and ſay, Lord, we never thought that our hearts were ſo hard, and that they had ſo little love of thy Ordinances, and ſo little regard of thy concernments; now we ſee it is not the *weight* of an affliction, but the *working* of thy grace, that will

will humble us? *Lord take away iniquity, and receive us graciously* [a]. But so much for the Call from Heaven to God's *Elisha's*. [a] Hos. 14. 2.

II. *This Doctrine is a call from Heaven to God's* Elijah's, *to mourn and lament, when God suffers them to be silenced.* If God doth at such a time *loudly* call his *Elisha's* to mourn and lament, sure he doth much *more loudly* call his *Elijah's* thereunto. What saith one of them? [b] If any should be in *sackcloth*, the *witnesses* should. It is said of *Tyrus*, that the chief mourners for her fall, shall be such as handle the *oare*. *The Mariners and Pilots shall wallow themselves in ashes, and cry bitterly; weep with bitterness of heart, and with a bitter wailing* [c]. In *Egypt* fall likewise the principal mourners are the *fishermen, they shall mourn, and all that cast angles into the brook, and they that cast nets* shall lament. [d] Should not *Fishers for mens souls* be principal mourners also under such an hand of God? Who should mourn, as the children of the bride-chamber, and friends of the bridegroom, *when the Bridegroom is taken from them* [e]? At such a time they have not onely lost their *livelihoods*, but the life of their lives; *their usefulness*: not onely *worship*, but *work*; not onely *means of getting good*, but *opportunities of doing good*; not onely *supplies from* the altar, but the *service* of the altar. To such let the following particulars be hinted from the same *man of God*, and I shall finish this *Call*.

[b] V. Eng. Remembr. p. 466, 467.

[c] Ezek. 27. 29.

[d] Isa. 19. 8.

[e] Mat. 9. 15.

1. Surely it is not for nothing that they are turned under the wheel.

2. It may be some of their hearts upbraid them for their careless entrance into their work, and their unfaithful management of it.

3. It may be some of them are possest with so dumb a Devil, that when they are off the stage, and stated Pulpit-work, they shall do little in occasional work, *viz.* Preaching, Converse, Conversation.

4. It

4. It may be some have cause to fear least the Lords forsaking of them should be joined with mans rejection; it may be some find deadnings, witherings, decayings, a secret gladness of such ease, and not missing their work, &c.

5. It may be some have much ado to keep down pride under the self-denial they are called to exercise.

6. It may be some of them find preaching of faith one thing, and living by it, another. Surely at such a time not onely all God's *Elisha's*, but all God's *Elijah's* should cry out a, *Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned. Renew our dayes as of old.* Amen, Amen.

a Lam. 5. 21.

FINIS.